

REMARKS

After entry of this Amendment, claims 1 - 5, 7 - 14 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7 - 9, and 12 - 14 have been amended. Claim 6 has been cancelled without prejudice. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

Claims 1 - 5 and 7 - 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blanchet et al. in view of Mansel. Claims 1, 5, 7 - 10 and 13-14 have now been amended to more clearly identify the distinguishing features over the cited prior art. Claim 1 requires a crank rotationally immovably positioned on a first end of the output shaft on the exterior side of the gear housing wherein the gear housing is disposed between and adjacent to the crank and the gear mechanism. Claim 1 further requires that the gear housing cover has a separate access opening on the side facing away from the crank for supporting a second end of the output shaft facing away from the crank during the press fit operation. Blanchet et al. does not show or disclose a crank disposed adjacent the gear housing. In Blanchet et al., the output shaft 10 is mounted within a sleeve 11 that is situated at the base of the casing or gear housing and extends away from the gear housing. Therefore the crank in Blanchet et al. is spaced from the gear housing and not positioned adjacent to the housing. Further, Blanchet et al. does not show or disclose a gear housing cover having a separate access opening on the side facing away from the crank. The cover 3 in Blanchet et al. does not itself have an access opening as required in claim 1. The separate access opening in the gear housing cover provides a support of the second end of the output shaft during the press fit operation while not exposing the remainder of the gear mechanism to damage or debris.

Claim 5 has been amended to require that the second end of the output shaft on a side facing away from the crank extends beyond the gear housing cover and wherein the gear housing cover has the separate access opening in this area. Blanchet et al. discloses in Column 6, Lines 16 - 18, that a space is provided between the terminal surface 56 of the end portion 23 of the output shaft 10 and the inner

surface of the cover plate 3. Because the output shaft does not extend beyond the cover plate 3 in Blanchet et al, there is no requirement for an access opening as required in claims 1 and 5. The access opening of the present invention allows the exposed end of the output shaft to be supported during the press fit operation. The configuration in Blanchet et al. would provide no support to the output shaft during a press fit operation.

Claim 7 has been amended to distinguish it from the prior art. Claim 7 is dependent on claim 5 and now requires that the access opening is closed with another cover having a configuration to enclose the extending second end of the output shaft. Having a separate access opening for supporting the output shaft minimizes dirt, debris, or other objects falling into the gear mechanism during the press fitting operation. The separate cover and access opening are disclosed in the subject patent application in paragraph [0027].

Claim 8 is distinguished from the cited prior art in that neither Blanchet et al. nor Mansel disclose supporting the second end of the crank through an access opening in a gear housing cover facing away from the work.

Claim 9 is distinguished from the cited prior art for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claim 13 is distinguished from the cited prior art for the same reasons as claim 5.

It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment traverses and overcomes all of the Examiner's objections and rejections to the application as originally filed. It is further submitted that this Amendment has antecedent basis in the application as originally filed, including the specification, claims and drawings, and that this Amendment does not add any new subject matter to the application. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested. It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment places the application in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is requested.

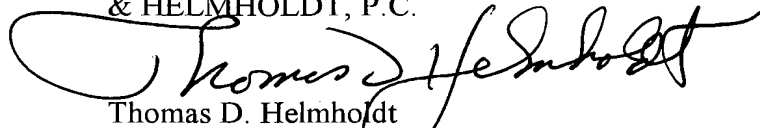
Application Serial No. 10/089,798
Date November 12, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated August 18, 2004

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If the Examiner feels that prosecution of the present application can be expedited by way of an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG, BASILE, HANLON, MacFARLANE, WOOD
& HELMHOLDT, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas D. Helmholdt", is written over the printed name and title.

Thomas D. Helmholdt
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Registration No. 33181
(248) 649-3333

3001 West Big Beaver Rd., Suite 624
Troy, Michigan 48084-3107
Dated: November 12, 2004
TDH/DPC/dge